# The Ground Truth:

Lived Experiences with Culture and Change in Military Education

Vanessa Brown, PhD
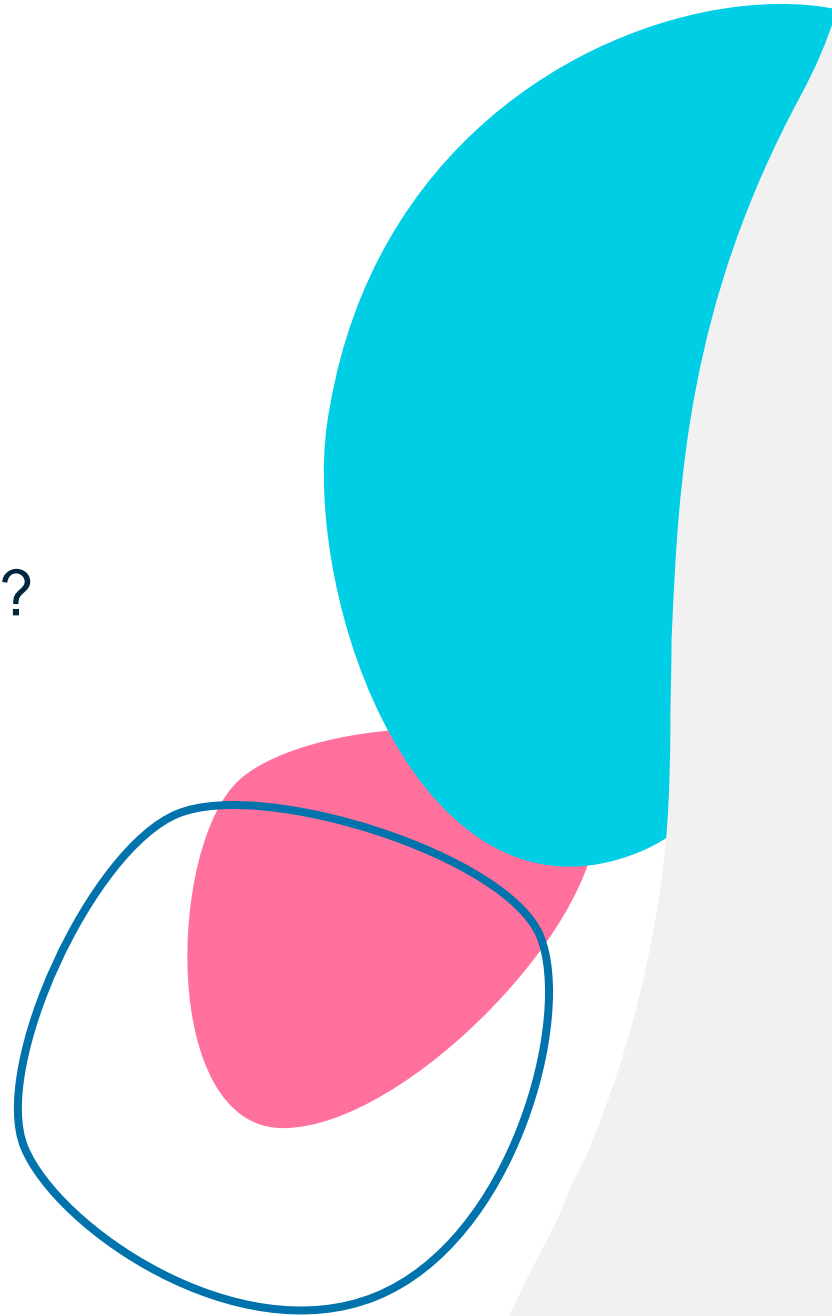CANADA

# Agenda

- Introduction
- Methods
- Theoretical Framework
- Findings
- Outcomes
- Closing remarks

# Asking Questions.

- How are gender and cultural perspectives integrated into curricula?

- Does military culture shape the reception of gender and cultural education?

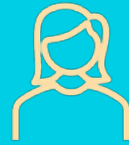- Can this learning facilitate culture change?

# Methods

| Textual Data | Focus Groups | In-depth Interviews | Follow-Up Interviews | Analysis |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Policy, curriculum, learning outcomes, rubrics, and syllabi | Focus Groups with: Civilian/Military Faculty Curriculum Developers Library staff Students | 16 In-depth interviews Students and Staff | 8 In-depth Interviews with Graduates in Command and Staff Roles | Critical Discourse Analysis |

# Theory

**Militarized Masculinities**

**Intersectionality**

**Military Culture**

# Findings

The Ground Truth

# Gender Inequity

"

My peers, who seem to think that I am okay, but I am not that good, think that every time I get something, it's because I am a woman. I have never had that rubbed in my face so much than while I have been in the Joint Command and Staff Programme

- (Brown, 2021, 108).

"

# Gendered Military Categories

"

There is bias that we have for the combat arms or operator. They will be viewed as having more leadership. They are viewed as capable of leading people to war. Whereas supporters are viewed as maybe a bit more, "they are good at their job, they are technicians rather than leaders" in some ways. So, there is a grading within the different trades and I think that came out in some ways at the College. . .Women fall even below this. Women fall in the same category as supporter, I think. Because support is considered a 'soft' trade

"

- (Brown, 2021, 105).

# Intersectionality

"

**What concerns me is that [there are] two individuals who [] have been directly affected specifically along the ethnic and diversity lines as well as gender. People who have chosen to retreat from the College [ ] because they didn't feel that, at the senior leadership level, there was anything more than a "now, now, everything is just fine" approach.**

"

- (Brown, 2021, 108).

# OUTCOMES

A. Militaries require change strategies that differ (significantly) from approaches needed for civilian defence organizations

B. Recognizing unique experiences of marginalization within military and civilian defence organizations leads to nuanced collaboration, allyship, and teamwork

C. Military members are key agents of change, not only institutionally, but societally.
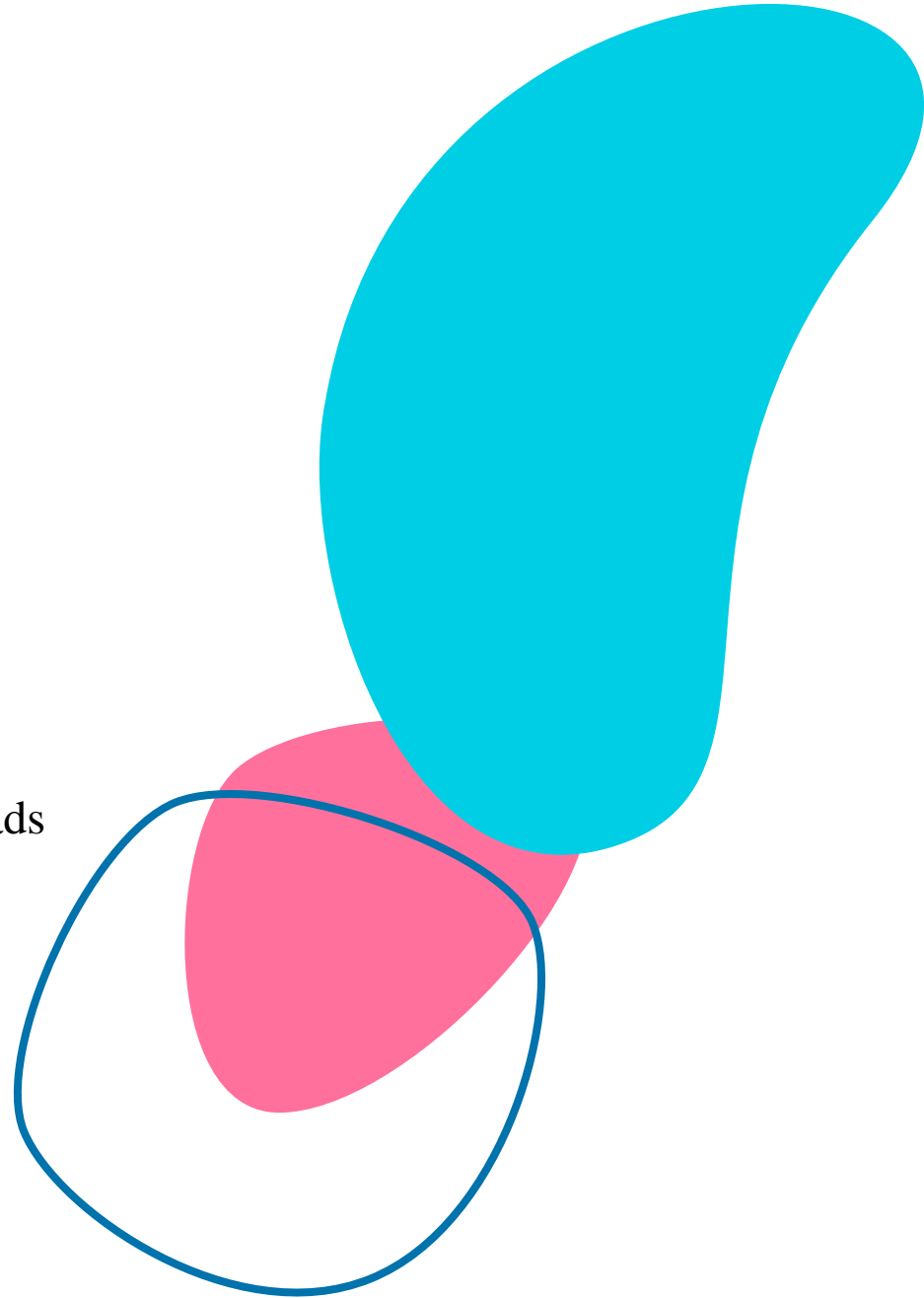
# Conclusions

Advocating for change has a price.

# Thank you

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